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Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. In its report of 23 June 1999, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations requested that the Secretariat submit a report on progress made in the implementation of its recommendations for which other specific reports had not been requested (A/54/87, para. 125).

2. The present report is submitted in response to that request. Its structure, for ease of reference, follows the organization of section III, entitled "Proposals, recommendations and conclusions", of the 1999 report of the Special Committee.

3. Events during the past year have reaffirmed the central role of United Nations peacekeeping within the international community's wider efforts to advance peace. United Nations peacekeeping has experienced a rapid increase in activity, including the creation of large operations, such as the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET); deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and a major expansion of the operation in Sierra Leone. These operations are taking on new, often unprecedented tasks.

4. United Nations peacekeeping offers unique advantages in addressing today's conflicts. The Organization's universality confers on it a legitimacy and political acceptability that enables it to foster reconciliation among competing actors and to manage operations that all concerned will support. At the same time, the breadth of the United Nations system gives it an unparalleled ability to coordinate action in a wide range of disciplines, including political, military, humanitarian and civil affairs; in civilian police, mine action and electoral efforts; and in economic assistance, rehabilitation and development activities.

5. A number of the recent missions of the United Nations are discharging very complex mandates, which demand a broader range of expertise to plan operations, provide them with guidance and ensure system-wide coordination. Since many of the areas of expertise involved have not traditionally been part of peacekeeping, it is essential to develop new conceptual and practical frameworks to tap such expertise.

6. These new operations make especially high demands in terms of administration and management because of the relatively high representation of civilian personnel. The recruitment of civilians must be conducted on an individual, post-by-post basis, and missions with a larger proportion of civilians require much greater per capita administrative and logistical support than an infantry battalion, for example, which is to some degree self-contained.

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7. It should also be noted that in a number of recently established or expanded missions, the United Nations has faced considerable demands in planning, deployment and support with very short lead time.

8. This situation presents a serious challenge to the Organization, requiring timely mobilization of human, financial and logistical resources. In this context, the Special Committee's expressions of support for the Secretariat's efforts to ensure its capacity to meet these demands successfully are appreciated.

II. Guiding principles, definitions and implementation of mandates

9. Close harmonization of political, social and developmental efforts is essential to enhance the international community's effectiveness, to reduce duplication during deployment of complex peacekeeping operations and to favour the smooth continuation of these efforts after their withdrawal.

10. As noted in my previous reports, a number of mechanisms have been introduced to enhance coordination in peacekeeping. These include the systems of executive committees and task forces at Headquarters, as well as full recognition of the overall authority of my Special Representatives for multidisciplinary peacekeeping operations within the mission area. It was also noted that resident representatives of the United Nations Development Programme have been appointed as deputies to the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, where appropriate.

11. In the context of the broad responsibilities given to many of today's peacekeeping operations, the Secretariat is working to further strengthen coordination, including with specialized agencies, such as the Bretton Woods institutions, and regional organizations.

12. One example of cooperation with specialized agencies is the peacekeeping operation in the Central African Republic, where the responsibilities of the United Nations in security, elections and institutional reform were complemented by the efforts of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to assist with economic stabilization and promote longer-term growth. This initiative took place in the context of an ongoing dialogue based upon mutual recognition of complementary responsibilities, which is also exemplified by the Bank's creation of an office that focuses upon conflict-related issues. Further examples in this regard are the joint assessment mission led by the World Bank in East Timor and the joint approach to donors for East Timor by the World Bank and the United Nations through the Tokyo Conference. Close cooperation has also been maintained between UNMIK and the World Bank, which has participated in reconstruction needs assessments and has provided advice on privatization and international investment.

III. Consultations

13. The Secretariat consults with prospective troop contributors from the earliest stage of the planning process, contacting both political and military counterparts at all levels. As the planning for prospective operations advances, more formal meetings are held with troop contributors to inform them of the expected parameters of the operation and personnel requirements.

14. Once an operation is established, regular meetings are held with troop contributors, under the chairmanship of the President of the Security Council, at the time a mandate is to be renewed or if the changes in the mandate are envisioned. The Secretariat also holds meetings with troop contributors on an as-needed basis, should the situation on the ground call for it, particularly in a crisis. Ongoing contact is also maintained with troop contributors at the desk officer level.

15. Monthly peacekeeping strength reports are available to Member States. In addition, the Secretary-General's weekly situation report to the Security Council on particular missions is available for troop contributors, through the Situation Centre of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

16. The Secretariat places the utmost importance on ensuring the good discipline of peacekeeping personnel, including troops, observers, civilian police and civilians, and has standard operating procedures that are followed in instances of alleged misconduct. These procedures are well established and are based on United Nations rules and regulations. For military and civilian police, disciplinary action to be taken following repatriation is the responsibility of the Member State concerned. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the head of mission to ensure that personnel under his or her command behave in accordance United Nations codes of conduct. In this connection, any alleged act of misconduct of such personnel is investigated under the authority of the head of mission, and, if warranted, a board of inquiry is established. On this basis, the head of mission will make a recommendation to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on the question of repatriation.

This policy reflects the need for peacekeeping operations to be able to act decisively, since this is essential for the efficiency, cohesion and morale of the mission and for the security of personnel. Thereafter, the Secretariat follows up with the Member State concerned on any disciplinary action taken by the latter.

IV. Enhancing the capacity of the United Nations for peacekeeping

A. Personnel

17. The Secretariat is in the process of formalizing the organizational structure of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations through established internal procedures. This involves a review by the Department of Management of structure and functions in substantive terms, as well as a technical review by the Office of Legal Affairs.

18. All offers by Member States to participate in peacekeeping operations are given full consideration. Where not all of these offers can be accommodated, feedback is provided directly to the relevant permanent missions on a confidential basis to explain why their respective offers were not accepted.

19. Announcements of available military and civilian police posts are circulated for 90 days, to ensure that Member States have adequate time in which to select and nominate officers.

20. During the phasing out of gratis military personnel, the Secretariat sought to stagger their departure to permit effective hand-over of responsibilities and to minimize disruptions. In a similar manner, the future rotation of officers (who are serving for varied terms) will be timed to avoid major, simultaneous departures of experienced personnel. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations makes every effort to ensure the highest professional merit and the broadest possible geographical representation in its staffing.

21. With regard to the need for gender balance, the Secretariat has processed responses from troop contributors to a questionnaire on the role and status of women in their military and civilian police forces. The findings offered a clearer picture of the evolving capacity of troop contributors to provide female personnel, and provide grounds for optimism even if this capacity remains limited. The Secretariat will continue to update these data and will use it to help improve the gender balance of peacekeeping operations, while simultaneously promoting geographical balance. The Secretariat renews its appeal to Member States to put forth names of female candidates who may be considered as potential candidates for senior posts in peacekeeping missions.

22. Also in this context, it should be noted that a female staff military officer has recently been appointed to the position of Chief of the Training Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The work of the Unit is particularly relevant in regard to gender mainstreaming, in that the Secretariat is working to incorporate gender sensitivity as one element within its training programmes. In addition, over a three-month period, one-day training workshops on gender mainstreaming were held for all departmental staff at Headquarters.

23. As noted in previous reports, the selection of senior officials in peacekeeping reflects mission requirements and professional merit, with due regard given to geographical representation and political considerations; such characteristics as keen political sense, good judgement and sensitivity to the special conditions of work in a multinational environment are also sought. Moreover, as noted above, the assistance of Member States is sought in identifying qualified female candidates. The procedures for the selection of senior appointments are as follows: the Secretariat identifies possible contributing countries, based on geographical distribution, contributions to peacekeeping and political sensitivities. Each country is asked to provide the curricula vitae of candidates. A short list is created on the basis of these submissions and in view of the experience and qualifications of the candidates. Those on the short list are called to New York for interviews by senior officials at Headquarters. On this basis, a recommendation for the appointment is made to the Secretary-General. The Secretariat greatly appreciates the strong support of Member States that have made available senior staff of the highest quality.

24. The training of chief administrative officers/senior management personnel continues to be an issue of high priority for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Furthermore, chief administrative and chief finance or budget officers for field missions are now invited to New York to discuss and review their respective mission budget proposals with the relevant offices at United Nations Headquarters, as well as to participate in the deliberations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The Special Committee's recommendation to include budget preparation in the training programme of chief administrative officers has been implemented.

25. With regard to the procedures applicable to former United Nations peacekeeping personnel who have been requested to testify before the two international criminal tribunals, the Secretariat has continued to pursue a policy of close cooperation.

26. The sample rules of engagement have been provided extensively to Member States for training purposes only. It is not intended that this status will change.

B. Organization, planning and coordination

27. As noted above (para. 17), the process of formalizing the new structure of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is nearing completion. In practice, the new division of responsibilities appears to be helpful in responding to current needs, although the rapid increase in workload has inevitably proved a major challenge to departmental staff.

28. In this connection, members of the Special Committee will also receive the medium-term plan of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

29. In addition to the mechanisms for harmonization of efforts within a peacekeeping operation referred to above (para. 10), it should be noted that working groups have been formed at Headquarters on cross-cutting issues (such as the control of small arms) which favour close cooperation at the working level. Also, coordination committees are established in the field at all levels, both at Headquarters and in the various districts.

30. The standby arrangements system database is the point of initial consultation used by the Military Planning Service in selecting contributors to a new or ongoing mission. This information is used to compile a list of potential contributors, which are then evaluated in terms of capabilities and with regard to political considerations, bearing in mind the desirability of appropriate geographical representation.

31. In this regard, the Secretariat welcomes progress in increasing representation within the standby arrangements system. As of December 1999, 87 Member States are participating; 32 of them have signed a memorandum of understanding, 11 within the past year. This represents a total of some 147,500 grouped personnel and individuals who are available in principle, subject to governmental approval on a case-by-case basis.

32. Discussions are continuing with Member States with regard to the need to overcome the existing deficiencies referred to in my report of 30 March 1999 (S/1999/361). However, it is still the case that contributions from most Member States have response times of 30 days or more. This can place severe limitations on planners when there is an immediate requirement to deploy resources. Further considerations on potential expansion of the standby arrangements system are described below.

33. The Special Committee's recommendation that chief administrative officers be informed regularly about changes to United Nations rules, regulations and procedures and consulted on potential changes is being routinely implemented.

34. Since April 1999, the Procurement Division has adopted the practice of sending bid invitations to all those vendors on its vendor roster that have registered for the product category being sought. This new practice has been made possible only through the use of a well-managed vendor database containing companies that have been carefully pre-screened. Under present circumstances, the Division cannot utilize the common supplier database on a regular basis until such time as a compatible pre-screening process is adopted. Nevertheless, the Division does use the common supplier database to identify additional vendors when its own vendor roster lacks a suitable number of potential vendors for the product being sought. The Procurement Division vendor roster currently contains over 3,700 vendors, is posted on the Division's web site and itself provides for a high level of competition in most cases.

35. With respect to paragraph 13 of General Assembly resolution 52/226 of 31 March 1998, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to take all possible measures to increase procurement from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, the Secretariat made available an information note on this question to members of the Fifth Committee for their discussions on procurement reform at the fifty-fourth session, including details of various measures taken to enhance transparency and increase the participation of vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. As *Development Business* is published only bimonthly, the current information posted on the web site of the Procurement Division may be of more use to vendors.

36. With respect to paragraph 14 of General Assembly resolution 52/226, Member States may wish to refer to the addendum to my report on procurement reform (A/53/271/Add.1), in which the question of preferential treatment is addressed. Similarly, within this report, the issue of favouring equally qualified vendors from countries that are current in their assessed contributions, as referred to in

paragraph 15 of General Assembly resolution 52/226, is clarified.

37. Innovative methods of procurement have been introduced to meet the urgent requirements of field missions without sacrificing the integrity of the United Nations procurement process. For instance, initial furniture requirements for UNMIK were met by utilizing the existing systems contract of the World Food Programme, which had been awarded on the basis of an international competitive bidding exercise. All field missions are provided with substantial delegated procurement authority at the outset of the mission.

38. The Procurement Division's video and CD-ROM project has been completed through generous contributions from the Governments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and France, which the Secretariat acknowledges with appreciation.

39. It is intended that the *Operational Support Manual* will be modular, with a main doctrinal volume covering common procedures and a series of specialized technical volumes covering specific areas, such as engineering, communications, supply and so on. Thus far, draft volumes on engineering, air operations and air safety have been produced and circulated electronically.

40. In accordance with General Assembly decision 53/480 of 8 June 1999, the Secretary-General will convene the Phase V Working Group on Reimbursement of Contingent-owned Equipment. The meeting is to be held from 24 to 28 January 2000.

41. With regard to the request by the Special Committee for a report on the experiences of the United Nations in demining in peacekeeping operations (A/54/87, para. 81), this task is now under way. Having assessed the scope of the information required, and bearing in mind both staffing constraints and the need to produce a report of high quality, it is estimated that the report will be complete in mid-2000. In the interim, the report of the Secretary-General on assistance in mine action (A/54/445), submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, provides an accurate reflection of the current situation in terms of mine action activities worldwide, including peacekeeping operations.

42. The fundamental principles and rules on the observance by United Nations forces of international humanitarian law were finalized and issued on 6 August 1999 as Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1999/13. The draft text that resulted from discussions within the Secretariat, as well as between the Secretariat and the International Committee of the Red Cross, was circulated to Member States at the end of June 1999. The Office of Legal Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations then jointly convened a meeting with Member States one month later to permit a final exchange of views on the text. After the meeting, several Member States provided additional comments. Input from those consultations was taken into account in finalizing the text.

43. There is increasing awareness of the importance of public information in peacekeeping, both as a security element and as a tool to achieve mission goals. The Secretariat has sought to address the public information and communications needs of new missions in the planning process and the start-up phase, while greater attention is also being paid to the public information needs of ongoing missions. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has worked in close partnership with the Department of Public Information in undertaking these tasks.

44. In order to disseminate objective and reliable information on the activities of United Nations peacekeeping operations, status-of-forces agreements concluded in recent years contain provisions concerning the right of the United Nations peacekeeping operations, in consultation with the Government of the host country, to operate their own radio broadcasting stations.

45. In the age of satellite broadcasting, desktop publishing and the Internet, equipment and technical support for public information in the field is critically important. Currently, the Secretariat faces significant challenges in developing public information strategies and capacities to deal with the requirements of new or rapidly evolving missions, such as those in East Timor, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kosovo and Yugoslavia. Public information also requires experienced staff with the appropriate skills as well as the essential technical and material support, and the staffing of public information components remains a special challenge. These specialists must have not only technical skills, but also the linguistic abilities and cultural sensitivity to communicate effectively.

46. The Secretariat would welcome closer cooperation with Governments and organizations in a position to help secure personnel, equipment and technical support. This might include the development of specific standby agreements or service packages for communications assets such as radio and television broadcasting in mission areas, or identifying qualified personnel for potential assignment as public information personnel for mission assignment. Financial support in the form of contributions to the Trust Fund for Public Information in Peacekeeping Operations

would also be welcome. Finally, in the past, there have also been in-kind contributions, such as the distribution of radio receivers, aimed at enhancing the capacity of the local population of the host country to receive information from a peacekeeping operation.

47. The Policy, Analysis and Lessons Learned Unit is entering a transitional phase and is currently nearing the conclusion of a series of major research projects. As these efforts are brought to completion, the Secretariat plans to undertake an in-depth review of the degree to which the interface between the Unit and the field could be adapted to ensure the maximum relevance of the work of the Unit.

C. Status-of-forces agreements

48. With regard to requests for a compendium of cases in which the Organization is owed restitution as a result of non-compliance with status-of-forces or other agreements, criteria are being developed to define accurately cases or instances which the Secretariat believes are bona fide violations of the respective status-of-forces agreements. The process of compiling the information has been slow owing to the intensity and complexity of the exercise. Care is being exercised not to list items that might not appropriately fit the definition of non-compliance. The Secretariat anticipates submitting a report to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions during the winter session and the information will be made available to the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

49. As peacekeeping practice continues to evolve, status-of-forces agreements have also evolved. Accordingly, both revised and new provisions have been regularly incorporated into status-of-forces agreements that the United Nations has negotiated with Governments hosting peacekeeping operations. Such provisions include, for example, those relating to international humanitarian law, United Nations radio stations, and temporal and financial limitations on the liability of the United Nations pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/247 of 26 June 1998, as well as provisions on contractors.

50. As such, the model status-of-forces agreement that was issued as a General Assembly document in October 1990 (A/45/594) continues to serve as the basic framework for the drafting of individual status-of-forces agreements, with additional provisions deemed necessary in the light of developments in peacekeeping practice and accepted by host States. As far as the security of members of United Nations peacekeeping operations is concerned, the responsibility of host Governments in this regard will be underscored in future status-of-forces agreements.

D. Safety and security

51. The Secretariat warmly welcomed the entry into force in January 1999 of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel (General Assembly resolution 49/59, annex), and is grateful for the efforts of the Special Committee to focus attention upon this issue, including its encouragement to those Member States that have not yet done so to consider becoming parties to the Convention. However, like the Special Committee, the Secretariat believes that more needs to be done.

52. The Secretariat appreciates the support shown the Special Committee by Member States for its efforts to enhance the security of United Nations peacekeeping personnel. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is still in the process of conducting a general and comprehensive review of security in peacekeeping operations. Owing to the upsurge in peacekeeping, the Department has been obliged in recent months to redirect staff involved in these efforts to other pressing needs. Nevertheless, some of the key requirements in enhancing the security environment for peacekeeping personnel, in particular military and civilian police observers and civilian staff, have been highlighted and, to the extent that financial and human resources allow, are being implemented in the new missions. These include the deployment of the appropriate number of security officers, pre-deployment training for security officers and other staff, and the provision of the necessary logistical support.

53. The requirement for pre-deployment training cannot be overemphasized. A successful example of such training was in the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), where a pre-deployment base of operations was established outside the immediate mission area so that, *inter alia,* security and other staff could be trained before deployment to East Timor. Consideration should be given to establishing such bases in other missions when and where possible.

54. The considerations mentioned above must be taken into account in budgets for missions and the necessary support for them provided by Member States.

55. Continued strengthening of the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator with personnel dedicated to security in peacekeeping operations would also assist

enhanced security. This would enable Headquarters-based security officers to be deployed in reconnaissance missions charged with planning peacekeeping operations and as part of advance headquarters for the missions. While this is done for some missions, the Office does not currently have the staff to do so for all missions. Further strengthening of the Office would also assist in providing the necessary oversight for security personnel in peacekeeping operations, in particular to conduct assessment missions to ensure that procedures are being followed, to conduct training for mission staff and to develop recommendations for further strengthening the security functions of the mission.

56. The Secretariat has reviewed and enhanced its procedures to ensure a continuous flow of information to Member States, especially during periods of crisis. On a responsive basis, given the Secretariat's responsibility for support to field missions, the Secretariat has provided information on personnel and developments in the field, particularly when safety and security are of concern. For example, over the past year, upon the tragic loss of the World Food Programme flight to Kosovo and during hostage incidents in Sierra Leone and Georgia, troop contributors were kept constantly aware of the current situation.

57. With a view to promoting the safety of travel to and within peacekeeping operations, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has undertaken a complete review of air safety as it pertains to peacekeeping.

58. With the recent upsurge in peacekeeping activities, the Department's Situation Centre has further enhanced its role of coordinating and disseminating information during periods of crisis. From the early days of the setting up of UNMIK, the Situation Centre facilitated daily video conferencing with United Nations agencies on the ground. In addition to daily situation reports, the Situation Centre may issue specific updates on an as-needed basis to keep all relevant Departments apprised of developments on the ground. In East Timor, the Situation Centre performed a pivotal role in providing support to both UNAMET and UNTAET.

E. Training

59. The Training Unit intends to translate its publications into the official United Nations languages once adequate funding is available. A number of instructional texts are already available in both working languages. In addition, certain key documents that peacekeepers may need to carry with them in the field, such as a checklist conveying a code of conduct for peacekeepers and basic instructions on how to respond to hostage-taking incidents, are available in all official languages.

60. In view of the limited staff time of the Training Unit, maximum use is being made of the United Nations training assistance teams, particularly for training tasks remote from New York. As requested in paragraphs 15 and 16 of General Assembly resolution 53/12 B of 8 June 1999, the Secretariat will propose additional staffing resources for the Training Unit in the context of the support account budget for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001.

61. The Secretariat will include training in cultural and, as noted above, gender sensitivity in its future mission-readiness training programmes. Given adequate resources, the Secretariat intends to conduct pre-deployment training tailored to the mission. This has taken place recently prior to the deployment of military liaison officers to certain capitals relevant to the peace process for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Training includes information on local sensitivities. In addition, the Secretariat also conducted an in-mission train-the-trainers exercise in Freetown, Sierra Leone, prior to the deployment of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).

F. Civilian police

62. All Member States were invited to the Follow-up Workshop on Civilian Police at Headquarters in July 1999. The Workshop built upon the March 1998 Civilian Police Seminar and was aimed at improving both understanding and capacity in this area. As indicated in the report circulated subsequently to all Member States, the participants in the Workshop emphasized the need to ensure that those officers deployed to the field possessed the training and abilities necessary for success. They also highlighted the need for logistics support and identified a number of key doctrinal issues that required further clarification; the continuation of this dialogue will require support from Member States. It was further suggested that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations could make a significant contribution by undertaking a coordinating or clearing-house function for doctrinal discussions and training seminars.

63. The key to progress in each of these areas was considered to be joint efforts by the Secretariat and Member States. It was suggested that the Secretariat work to develop the representation of police within standby arrangements. In this regard, it is notable that in the past 12 months civilian police participation in standby arrangements has nearly doubled from 1,300 to approximately 2,200, and further increases are expected. Unfortunately, this progress has been

dwarfed by the massive increase in requirements associated with the new operations; total authorized police deployment has now reached approximately 9,000.

64. The Civilian Police Unit has been strengthened through the appointment of a Chief of the Unit at the D-1 level in November 1999. Three P-4 and one P-3 civilian police officers reported in February and March 1999. The selection process to fill the P-5 Deputy post has been completed. The Civilian Police Unit has also benefited from reinforcement by one officer filling an approved position in the rapidly deployable mission headquarters (RDMHQ). Furthermore, three additional Professional officers and one additional General Service staff position for the Civilian Police Unit have been included in the requests for revision to the current support account.

65. Staffing and recruitment procedures for seconded personnel for the Civilian Police Unit are similar to those in the remainder of the Military and Civilian Police Division. Positions are circulated in advance to all Member States, which are invited to propose candidates in active civilian police service. These candidates are then subjected to an intensive review process, following which the Department will recommend the recruitment of the most qualified candidates. In circumstances where there are comparably well-qualified candidates, the recommendation is made with due regard to geographical representation and gender balance.

66. The Civilian Police Unit has undertaken the preparation of a generic set of standard operating procedures, which contains instructions governing day-to-day activities and includes a code of conduct, for civilian police officers in United Nations peacekeeping operations. In addition, an effort is under way to clarify some of the key principles and guidelines for civilian police operations, taking into account the rapidly changing nature of this question in view of recently established missions.

67. In conducting peacekeeping operations with civilian police dimensions, the Secretariat has sought to ensure appropriate division of labour between military and civilian police. However, as new mandates have been given to the United Nations, particularly where police have been asked to undertake an executive role, new questions have arisen. During the July 1999 Follow-up Workshop on Civilian Police, it was noted that the number of grey areas, those tasks not clearly belonging to either the military or the police, was inclined to increase, and there were very divergent views on the advisability of the use of arms. In this context, it was suggested that Member States might wish to convene a discussion on this question, with a view to clarifying key issues and fostering a consensus approach.

68. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has held two United Nations train-the-trainer workshops for police since the last meeting of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. The first of these, for Asian countries, was held at Kuala Lumpur from 12 to 16 April 1999. A second workshop for African countries was held at Accra from 22 to 26 November 1999.

G. Standby arrangements and rapid deployment

69. As the United Nations undertakes complex new tasks, it urgently requires access to a broad range of new skills, as described above. The Secretariat has therefore begun to pursue further development of rosters of civilian administrators and other civilian personnel, either within the United Nations database or within corresponding national systems. Further expansion of the standby arrangements system may be of assistance in enhancing access to expertise in such areas as law, public information and engineering, within either civilian or military establishments. It is essential that the Secretariat and Member States energetically continue to explore ways to improve the ability to tap such expertise.

70. The United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, which is managed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, maintains stocks of certain essential equipment for field missions. The two mission start-up kits held at the Logistics Base have amply proved their value by facilitating the rapid deployment of the new and expanded missions fielded by the Department during 1999. These start-up kits have, however, been fully utilized in support of recent major deployments; the Secretariat is now working on their urgent replenishment. The Secretariat therefore welcomes the Special Committee's support for consideration of additional contracting authority mechanisms.

71. The Secretariat also appreciates the Special Committee's support for the Organization's capacity to deploy rapidly upon adoption of a Security Council mandate. While staffing both within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and in the field has been stretched to capacity, the Secretariat has worked to identify staff serving in existing field missions who can be deployed at short notice to provide start-up support. Those managing the missions concerned are being advised of these arrangements and the individuals identified and have been asked to ensure that

understudies are trained to assume the duties of the designated staff when necessary. In addition, personnel from the Military and Civilian Police Division have been used in the start-up phase of a mission. However, this has at times imposed an unmanageable burden upon staff at Headquarters, particularly where the Secretariat has had to explore start-up of more than one mission concurrently.

72. Also in this connection, the Secretariat has sought repeatedly to obtain full staffing for the rapidly deployable mission headquarters but has been unable to obtain the necessary support to realize this concept. While two support account positions (Humanitarian Officer and Civilian Police Officer) were approved for RDMHQ, it was directed that the additional six posts be filled through redeployment within the Secretariat; this proved to be impossible, in view of other immediate demands upon staff time.

73. In this context and in view of the concern expressed by the Special Committee, the Secretariat intends to explore other options through which these goals could be achieved, bearing in mind the evolving demands that the international community faces in the field; this will also respond to the request by the General Assembly for a comprehensive review of this issue (General Assembly resolution 53/12 B, para. 20).

74. In the view of the Secretariat, exploration of the concept of linking the standby arrangements system with procedures for contingent-owned equipment merits further consideration. With regard to the suggestion that applicable memoranda of understanding be developed, it should be noted that the memorandum of understanding for the standby arrangements system is different from that used for contingent-owned equipment. The memorandum for the standby arrangements system is a general document of intent and thus does not entail a specific commitment; by contrast, the memorandum of understanding for contingent-owned equipment is mission-specific.

75. The Secretariat draws the attention of all Member States that have pledged resources under the standby arrangements with the United Nations, as well as those Governments who may wish to do so in the future, to the text of the standard memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and a participating State contributing resources to a United Nations peacekeeping operation issued in my report of 27 August 1997 (A/51/967, annex). This information can be used by Governments to facilitate advance clearance of the general provisions of the memorandum of understanding by the respective competent national authorities, thus expediting eventual final approval of the document, for which only mission-specific conditions (under article 8 of the memorandum), as well as personnel, equipment and services requirements (in the annexes to the memorandum) will need to be negotiated and agreed to when the decision to deploy standby troops is taken. This approach will permit an element of flexibility within the process of standby arrangements between Member States and the United Nations, as called for in the report of the Phase IV Working Group on Reimbursement of Contingent-owned Equipment (A/C.5/52/39) and endorsed by the General Assembly.

H. Finances

76. With respect to reimbursements for troop costs and contingent-owned equipment, which are usually for substantial amounts, it is the United Nations policy to pay all troop-contributing countries at the same time in order to ensure equal treatment of all Governments. The timing of the payments for troop reimbursement and contingent-owned equipment, however, is dependent upon the receipt of assessed contributions, and delays result from a lack of funds that reflects unpaid assessments. Claims for goods and services provided under Letter of Assist arrangements, as well as those for death and disability, are processed on an individual basis as claims are received and certified. If there are no funds in the mission's special account to cover certified Letter of Assistance claims, the claim is placed in accounts payable until such time as sufficient payment of outstanding assessments is received.

77. Over the last 12 months, considerable efforts have been made to process the backlog of claims. The Secretariat has now completed the calculations for the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNISOM), the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) and the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) and has submitted them to the troop-contributing countries in question. However, it should be noted that there are a number of constraints beyond the Secretariat's control that contribute to delays in processing the backlog. These include delays in the receipt of essential supporting documents from troop-contributing countries; the cash flow situation in the Special Account for Peacekeeping Activities; and, in a few instances, the need for additional appropriations by the General Assembly.

78. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is undertaking the necessary preparatory work to address the medical issues of concern to the Special Committee in an appropriate forum. Efforts to pursue the matter actively have

been affected by the lack of personnel with the appropriate expertise. The Medical Support Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was fully staffed with gratis personnel and one General Service staff member until February 1999, when the practice of employing gratis personnel was discontinued. The General Assembly approved two Professional posts for staffing the Medical Support Unit in the support account for the financial period 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000. The recruitment exercise to encumber both posts is currently under way, and is expected to be completed early in 2000; one of the Professional posts has been filled on an interim basis.

79. With regard to the payment of compensation on account of death and disability, to date, only 30 of the 564 claims submitted prior to 19 May 1997 are outstanding. The majority of these claims (18) are from one country, from which the Secretariat has now received some of the information required to process the claims. For the remaining cases, the Secretariat is awaiting additional information from the permanent missions of the respective Member States. Claims for incidents that occurred prior to 1 July 1997 are settled in accordance with the national legislation of Member States. The Secretariat has provided detailed guidelines to assist Member States in preparing their claims and maintains regular contact with them in an effort to speed up the process.

80. It should be noted that acceptance by the Organization of preliminary notification from concerned Member States to enable claims to be filed in a timely manner is an accepted practice. Exceptional measures were agreed to by the General Assembly for the retention of obligations for a period of up to five years, including the year the obligation was raised, in order to settle all outstanding claims. Accordingly, claims received after that time are considered non-receivable.

81. In cases where the Secretariat is notified of a service-incurred disability, it is generally ensured that proper medical reports are filed in order to secure reimbursement for payment of medical expenses, and moral and other support is provided in the mission area up to the moment of repatriation. The Secretariat maintains a roster of all pending compensation cases for which preliminary notification has been filed and would be able, within existing resources, to notify the Member States concerned of cases nearing the five-year maximum period, at least six months prior to the end of that period.

82. The Secretariat is also cognizant of the hardship suffered by affected families and seeks to alleviate this by settling all death and disability claims promptly. It is in this context that the Secretariat has provided the detailed guidelines, referred to above, to assist Member States in preparing their claims.

83. The Secretariat periodically forwards letters to the permanent missions in an effort to obtain documentation for the settlement of claims under the old procedures. While the Secretariat continues to receive claims for incidents that took place prior to 1 July 1996, it is expected that their numbers will gradually decrease and will be exhausted during the latter part of 2000. To facilitate the payment of claims, when reviewing claims of affected persons, the utmost care is given by the Secretariat to all details of a case, and where information is unclear or is lacking, Member States are contacted as a matter of course.

84. During the past year, concerted efforts have been made to complete liquidation of missions closed prior to December 1997, and this exercise is expected to be finalized in the current fiscal year. As for the missions closed after January 1998, keeping in mind the lessons learned, procedures have been instituted to allow for the preparation of their liquidation well before termination of the mandates. As a result, for example, it has been possible to conduct the liquidation of the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) and the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) within the initial liquidation time-frame. The Secretariat will continue to pursue this approach in dealing with missions that are scheduled for liquidation so as to ensure that this is carried out in a timely manner.

85. The Secretariat has taken measures to refine the present mission start-up budgeting mechanism by, in particular, ensuring that the initial financial resources required for new or expanding operations are reflected in the budget for each mission in line with the physical resources available from start-up kits maintained in the United Nations Logistics Base. This enables a new mission to become operational at a relatively early stage after being given its mandate. It also allows for replenishment of start-up kits at the Logistics Base once the budgets of the new missions are approved, thus providing the capability to provide start-up kits for subsequent operations promptly.

86. With regard to the question of disbursement from United Nations trust funds, the establishment of a trust fund is governed by financial rules 106.3, 106.4, 107.5, 107.6 and 107.7, which stipulate that a trust fund may be established only if its purpose is consistent with the policies and aims of the Organization, and that it shall be administered in accordance with the Organization's financial rules and

regulations. Hence, disbursements may only be effected once cash contributions have been received, credited to the Organization's general account and allotted to the specific trust fund account by the Controller.

87. All peacekeeping budget submissions to the General Assembly include a section on voluntary contributions, in which the Secretariat is required to report on all trust funds established in peacekeeping operations, including pledges, voluntary contributions received and expenditures thereon.

V. Cooperation with regional arrangements

88. The Special Committee also drew attention to the need to cooperate with regional partners and, in this context, to the importance of efforts to enhance African peacekeeping capacity. The Organization's new or expanded operations in Kosovo, Yugoslavia, East Timor, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone, together with ongoing operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and Tajikistan, exemplify such partnerships with regional efforts, whether taken through or outside the established institutional framework of a regional organization. These experiences have also testified to the reality that the primacy of the Security Council remains essential.

89. Ground-breaking efforts in terms of cooperation with regional arrangements have been undertaken in UNMIK, where the United Nations operation is collaborating with the European Union in regard to reconstruction and rehabilitation, and with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in institution-building. Both organizations are working under the authority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. This experience may provide useful guidance for other joint efforts with regional organizations in the future.

90. However, it should be borne in mind that, regardless of the arrangements made within any particular mission, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations inevitably poses considerable challenges, which cannot be solved without ongoing efforts by the international community. These relate, *inter alia,* to the differences between respective mandates and financial and logistical resources, as well as separate channels of communication with Member States.

91. In this regard, the Secretariat's lessons-learned report on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations has been circulated to all permanent missions, as well as to a number of regional organizations and peacekeeping training centres.

92. The Secretariat welcomed the additional focus given to efforts to enhance African peacekeeping capacity by the Security Council's ministerial meeting on cooperation with Africa on 29 September 1999 (S/PV.4049). Real progress in this area demands both the ongoing commitment of African States and strong and sustained support by the international community. It is important to note that 21 African countries are now participating in United Nations operations in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. By strengthening the capacity of African States to participate in peacekeeping, the international community can enhance the ability of the United Nations to promote peace around the world.

93. In this regard, the Secretariat is coordinating efforts with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to establish a regular forum of African and non-African States for strengthening cooperation in various capacity-building areas. Proposals for the terms of reference for such a group were circulated on 19 April 1999, and a number of comments have been received; these arrangements will be finalized in consultation with OAU, the Group of African States at the United Nations and donor countries. With regard to the enhancement of the institutional capacity of OAU, discussions are under way on short-term exchanges of staff, with United Nations staff going to the OAU Conflict Management Division and OAU staff coming to the Situation Centre of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. In addition, two United Nations military liaison officers have been deployed to Addis Ababa in the context of peacekeeping cooperation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

94. In addition to these efforts, the Secretariat has continued its training activity in Africa, including at the subregional level. In cooperation with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), training personnel from the Secretariat advised and supported supervision of the training exercise Blue Crane in April 1999 and assisted in instructing a senior management course organized in conjunction with the opening of the SADC Regional Peace Training Centre in June 1999. Also in June 1999, in coordination with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Secretariat participated in the organizational seminar of the newly established regional peacekeeping centre in Côte d'Ivoire. The Secretariat also contributed expertise to a peacekeeping seminar in Gabon in June 1999, which was organized in preparation for a regional peacekeeping exercise to be held in Central Africa in early 2000. The Secretariat's train-the-trainers workshop

for civilian police in Accra, referred to in paragraph 68 above, was attended by 40 police trainers from 19 African countries. The Secretariat has also undertaken to serve as a clearing-house for the collection and dissemination of training information. However, effective performance of this function is dependent upon the availability of the necessary capacity within the Secretariat, as noted above, together with the provision of timely responses from Member States, to ensure that the information involved is up to date, accurate and accessible.

95. In continuation of the efforts of the Secretariat to enhance the representation of African countries in the United Nations standby arrangements system, in November 1999 the Head of the Standby Arrangements Unit visited Abidjan, where the Government hosted common briefings and bilateral consultations in collaboration with the delegations of Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, the Niger and Togo. With the decision of Malawi to join the standby arrangements system, the total number of African States involved has reached 23; four of these States (Benin, Chad, Tunisia and Zimbabwe) signed memoranda of understanding during the past year.

VI. Observations

96. At the threshold of the new millennium, it is clear that United Nations peacekeeping will continue to play a key role in the world community's efforts to maintain international peace and security. The present moment represents a historic opportunity to make full use of and further enhance its demonstrated capacity. A strong partnership between the Secretariat and Member States is key if we are to successfully seize this opportunity.

97. Particular areas where cooperation between Member States and the Secretariat are key include the need to quickly have available the appropriate skills and equipment to address today's operational needs; further support for the participation of civilian police in peacekeeping; and redoubled efforts to strengthen African peacekeeping capacity. The Secretariat also welcomes the Special Committee's clear support for the institutional readiness of the Secretariat to address conflict. The rapid fluctuation in peacekeeping activity over the past two years underscores the need to maintain an institutional and operational capacity at all times.

98. This spirit of partnership is also crucial to the effective management of peacekeeping, where Member States and the Secretariat have complementary roles to play. Transparency and consultation of Member States by the Secretariat are essential, both as a means to pool institutional knowledge and in order to better reflect the priorities and concerns of the international community. At the same time, the Secretariat ultimately retains the responsibility for administration and management of United Nations peacekeeping and will continue to take the necessary actions within its prerogatives, with full regard for the legislative role of Member States.

99. The Secretariat is deeply grateful to the Member States that have made their personnel available, even though it has been impossible to ensure their swift reimbursement. Their readiness to make such sacrifices testifies to their commitment to the ideals of international cooperation.

100. Finally, I wish above all to recognize the women and men who are serving with dedication and courage in our peacekeeping operations around the world and are giving life to the promise of the Charter of the United Nations. They are accomplishing very challenging tasks in situations of great hardship and all too often, as we have seen, of extreme danger. Each and every one of them deserves our profound admiration and gratitude.